



Influenza vaccine

Influenza Virus

The Influenza vaccine is part of the routine Yukon Immunization Program

Influenza (flu) disease is an upper airway infection caused by the influenza virus. The virus spreads through coughing, sneezing, or close contact. It can also spread by touching a contaminated object and then not washing your hands before touching your own eyes, mouth, or nose. Influenza can cause serious complications, including pneumonia or death. Young children, pregnant women, the elderly and those with chronic conditions are at high risk of severe flu. Every year, health care providers offer the flu vaccine for free to everyone six months of age and older.

Influenza can cause:

- fever;
- fatigue (tiredness);
- cough and shortness of breath;
- muscle pains;
- runny or stuffy nose;
- headache; and
- sore throat.

Complications may lead to:

- pneumonia; and
- death.

Why is the flu vaccine recommended?

Getting immunized is the best way to prevent influenza. Influenza can be very dangerous, especially to those at high risk.

Other ways to help prevent the spread of the flu are to wash your hands regularly, clean and disinfect objects that are frequently touched, cough or sneeze into your shirt sleeve and stay home when you are ill.

The flu immunization is very effective and safe. Getting immunized against the flu helps protect others as well as yourself.

Possible side effects of the vaccine

Common reactions to the shot may include redness, tenderness and swelling at the injection site. Some may develop a fever, headache, fatigue, or digestive problems. These are generally mild and last 1 to 2 days.

Side effects of the immunization are easy to relieve. Apply a cold, damp compress to the site. If needed, give a pain reliever like acetaminophen. Talk to your health care provider if your symptoms are severe or last longer than 48 hours.

It's important to stay at the clinic for 15 minutes after getting the vaccine because, although it's very rare, some people might have a severe allergic reaction. The clinic can treat it right away. This happens to less than 1 in a million people. If you have a reaction after leaving, call 911 or your local emergency number.

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